

REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1-9, 11, 13, 14, 17-27 and 30-45 were pending in this application. Claims 30-32 were allowed. Claim 32 was objected to for an alleged informality.

Claims 1 and 4-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Lebby et al. European Patent Publication No. EP 0798650 (hereinafter "Lebby") in view of Etoh U.S. Patent No. 5,729,289 (hereinafter "Etoh").

Claims 11, 13, 14, 17-19, 22, 25, 27, 33-42, 44 and 45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Lebby.

Claims 2 and 3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Lebby in view of Etoh and further in view of Rowland U.S. Patent No. 5,801,970 (hereinafter "Rowland").

Claims 20, 21, 23 and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Lebby in view of Rowland.

Claims 26 and 43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Lebby in view of Hornback WIPO Patent Publication WO 99/56463 (hereinafter "Hornback").

Applicant's Reply

Applicant has amended claim 30 to more particularly define the claimed invention. Applicant has amended claim 32 to correct the alleged informality.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the allowance of claims 30-32. Solely in order to expedite prosecution, applicant has cancelled claims 1-9, 11, 13, 14, 17-27 and 33-45 without prejudice. Applicant reserves the right to pursue

the subject matter of the cancelled claims in one or more continuation applications.

Applicant has added new dependent claims 46-51. Support for the newly added claims can be found in the originally-filed specification and drawings. No new subject matter has been added. Each of the new claims depends from allowed claim 30, and applicant submits that the newly added claims are patentable for at least this reason.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Prompt consideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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